



Strength Based Community Youth Work

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Strength Based Community Youth Work

Values, Relationship and Practice

**Dr. Breda Friel
Magee**

Community Youth Work – Trauma Management – Therapeutic – MBSR/MBCT



Robert F. Kennedy, 1968

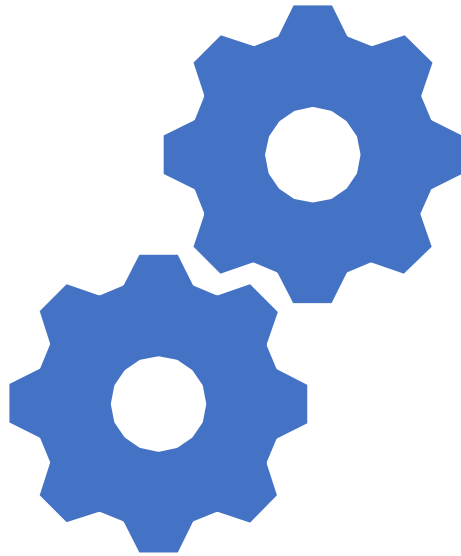
- *The gross national product does not allow for the health of our children...their education, or the joy of their play.*
- *It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages; the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials.*
- *It measures neither wit nor courage; neither our wisdom nor our teaching; neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country.*
- *It measures everything, in short, except that which makes life worthwhile.*



Outline

- Deficit to Strength
- Positive Psychology
- Strengths Based Approaches
- The Taken for granted -Normal!
- Adversity and Developmental Insults
- What Works
- Process
- Outcomes





Strength Based Approach

www.menti.com

68 36 65



Ole Gunnar Solskjær |

Psychology



- *To replace neurotic misery with ordinary unhappiness: Freud*
- Models in physics/natural sciences rather than life sciences
- Normal NOT average RATHER what is well-functioning
- Psychology aimed at (Seligman):
 - Curing mental illness
 - Making the lives of all people more fulfilling
 - Identifying and nurturing high talent

Seligman, M. (1998)

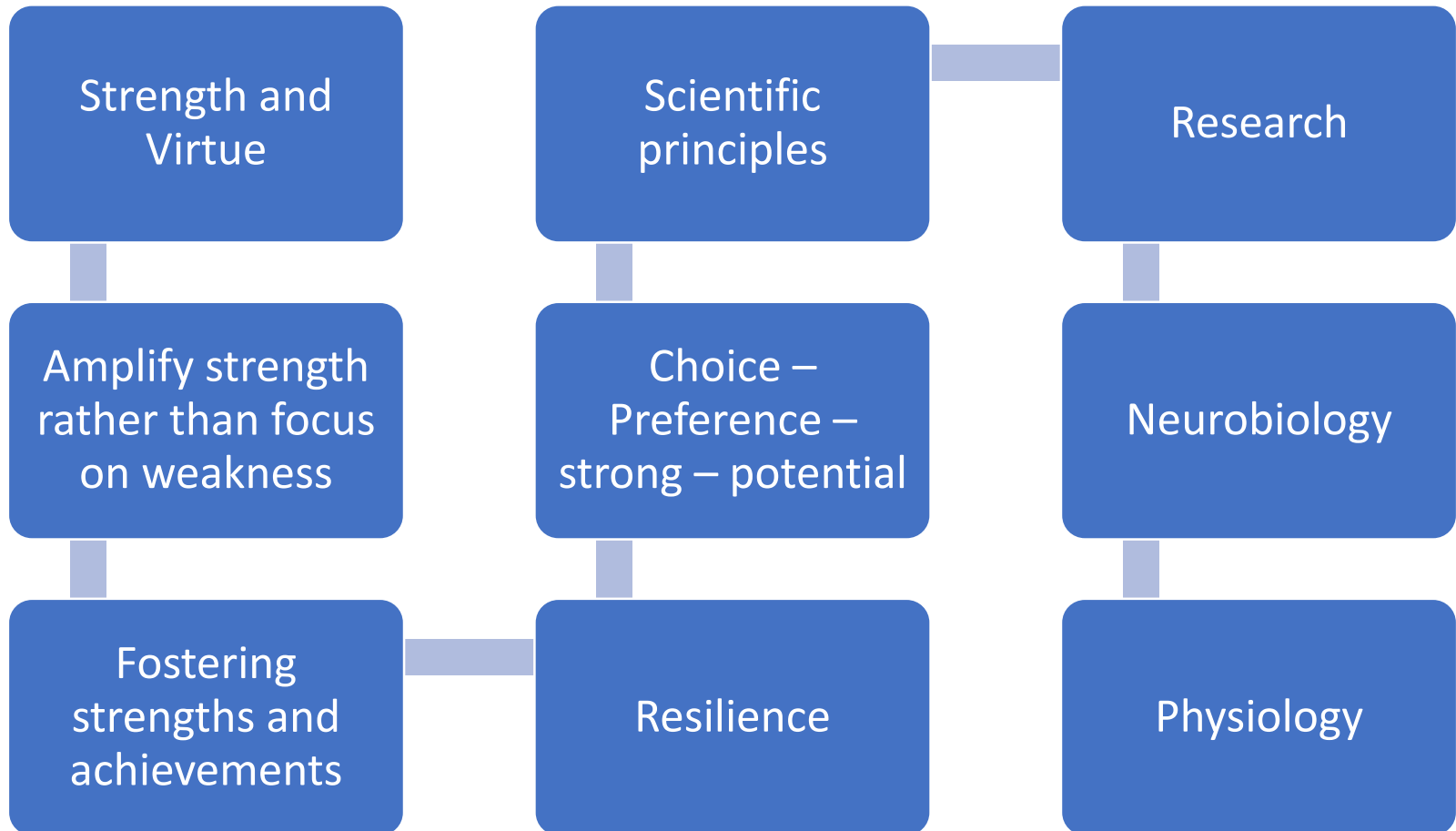
We became a victimology. Human beings were seen as passive foci: Stimuli came on and elicited “responses” or external “reinforcements” weakened or strengthened “responses”, or conflicts from childhood pushed the human being around.

Viewing the human being as essentially passive, psychologists treated mental illness within a theoretical framework of repairing damaged habits, damaged drives, damaged childhoods and damaged brains.

Medical model of personal weakness

Pathologizing does not move closer to prevention

Toward a Positive Psychology



Terms

Positive psychology: The science and applications related to the study of psychological strengths and positive emotions



Reality Negotiations: The ongoing processes by which people arrive at agreed upon world views or definitions



Social Constructions: The perspective or definition that is agreed upon by many people to constitute reality (rather than some objectively defined “truth” that resides in objects, situations and people)

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Code 43-73-40

*What knowledge, skills
and qualities are needed
to work to a strengths
based approach in
Community Youth Work?*



Approach

- Present moment
- Mind the Gap
- Managing the Busy Mind
- Aversion Script
- Learned Habits and Pattern

Resilience

A class of phenomena characterised by patterns of positive adaptation in context of significant adversity or risk. (Masten, Cutilli, Herbers and Reed: 2009)

Inferential concept

Judgement that individuals are doing ok!

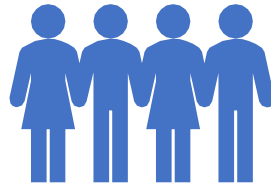
Set of expected behaviours

Exposure to risk/adversity

Criteria for measuring positive adaptation and/or development

Past or current presence of conditions that disrupt positive adaptation or can harm development

Masten et
al.(2009)



- Rutter (1985)
- Werner & Smith (1982)
- Protective factors
- D'Imperio ,Dubow and Ippolito (2000) *identified protective factors failed to distinguish young people who cope with adversity*
- *Most persistent factors:*
 - *Culture*
 - *Past experience of adversity*
 - *A caring adult*

Resilience Resources: In the child

Talents valued by self/others

Problem-solving skills

Self-regulation skills and self-control of
attention, arousal and impulses

Positive self perception; self-efficacy

Talents valued by self/others

Masten, Cutuli, Herbers, and Reed
(2009)

Circle of Courage Definitions - The ABCD of Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity

Brendtro,
Brokenleg, & Van
Brockern (1990)

Mastery	Belonging	Generosity	Independence
A chieving your goals	B eing a respectful part of a group	C ontributing positively to others	D emonstrating personal responsibility
Creative Persistent Competent Self-motivated Problem solver Accepts challenges	Friendly Caring Cooperative Trusting Respectful Healthy relationships	Sharing Caring Supportive Helpful Compassionate Social concerns	Assertive Confident Leadership Empowered Self-control Problem solver Disciplined



Brendtro and Larson

- Resilient achievements
- Strong self worth
- Respects self
- Respects others
- Pain based problems
- Poor self worth
- Disrespect self
- Disrespect others

Resilience resources: Family –Community-Organisations

- Positive attachment
- Close competent pro-social adults
- High warmth, structured monitoring parenting
- Positive home climate
- Organised home
- Parents/caregivers with protective qualities
- Interest in education
- Socio-economic advantage
- Effective schools
- Ties to pro-social organisations – Youth sectors
- Collective efficacy in neighbourhood
- High level public safety
- Effective emergency social services
- High level public health care availability

Intensity and Giftedness



Emotional intensity

Stimulated by
what's around and
what moves from
within

Misunderstood

Excited v excessive

Persistent v
nagging

Questioning v
undermining

Emotion and
sensitivity v
immaturity

Self-directedness v
oppositional

What is normal

- Outside the normal
- Exceptional
- Viewed as abnormal
- Annoying or bad ...
- Statistics-average constitutes norm (wage, intelligence)
- Convention
- Statistical norm is a poor guide to what is good



Optimal

Optimal functioning

What we strive for

Healthy

Normal = well-functioning but NOT necessarily average

Optimal = well-developed through training and/or by having higher natural endowment



The Greater the gap between self-image and ideal-self
The lower the self esteem Depression →

Coopersmith (1967)

Depressed person
Excessively self-critical
Low self-efficacy

Social Learning Theorist

Bandura (1977)

Combines two issues
Self-Concept
And
Self-control

**Feature of Bandura's method
of cognitive Behaviour Therapy**

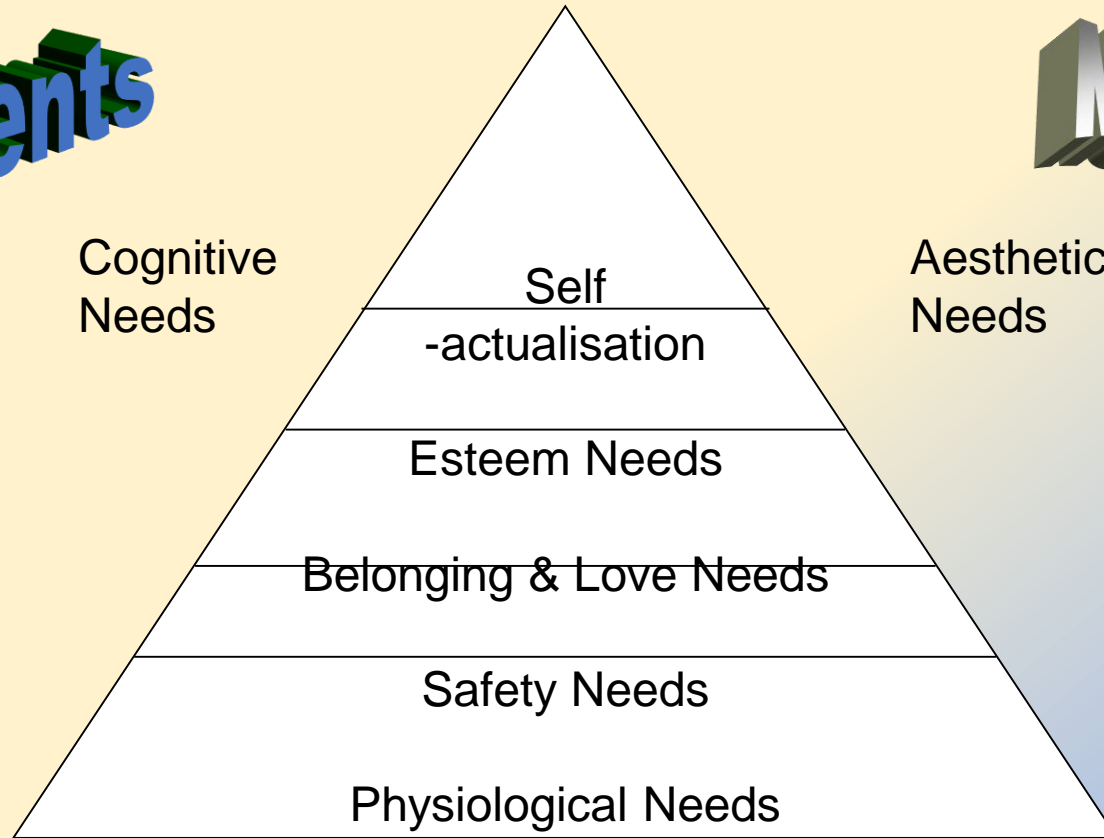
A matter that becomes clear ceases to concern us: Friedrich Nietzsche

Maslow's theory of Self-Actualisation (1954)

Hierarchy of Needs

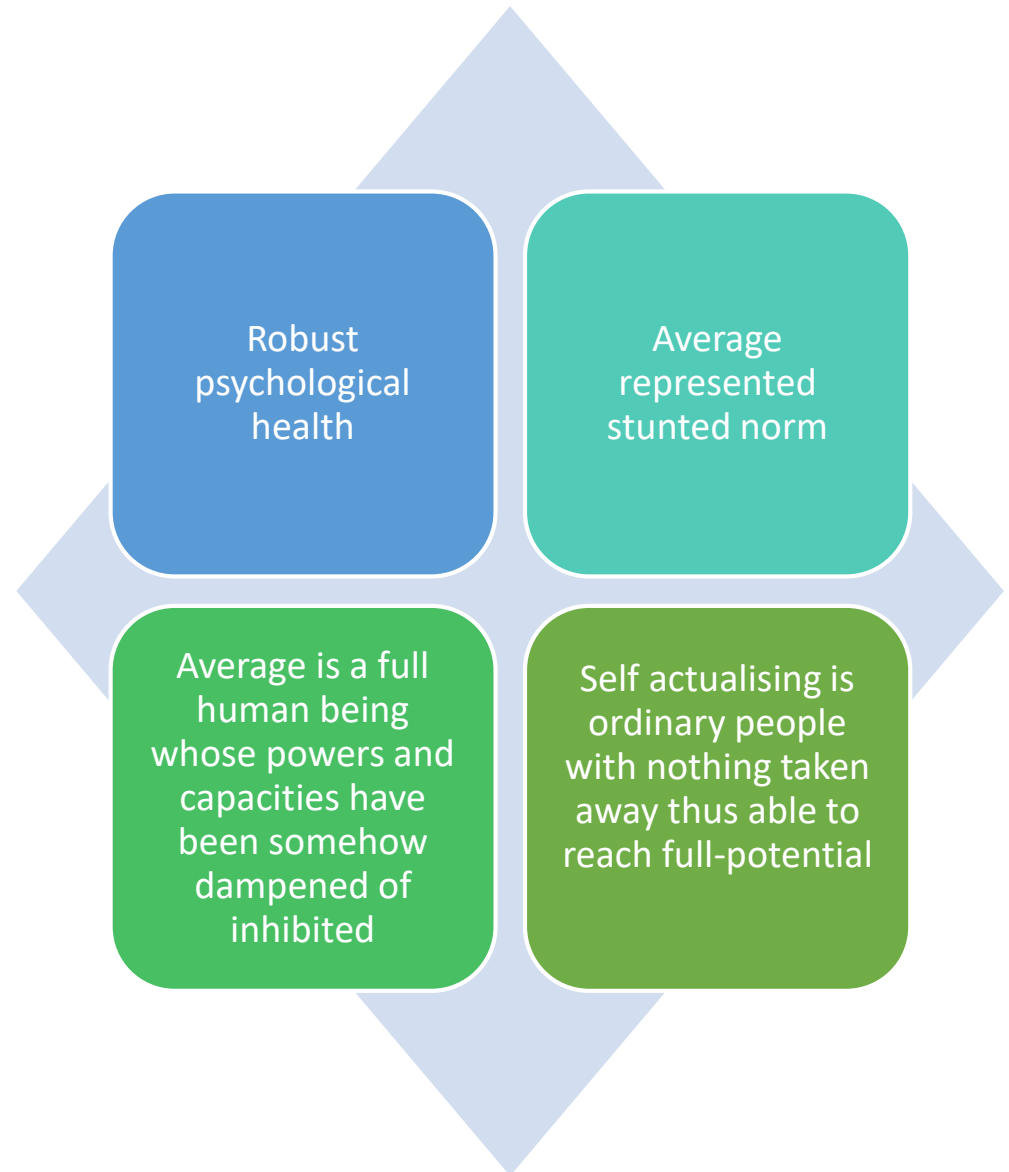
Clients

Needs



Five Classes of Basic Needs

Maslow (1970)



Maslow- Fully Human

More Accurate
Perception of Reality

Greater Acceptance
of Self and Others

Greater Spontaneity
and Self-Knowledge

Greater Problem
Centering

Greater Need for
Privacy

Greater Autonomy
and resistance to
Enculturation

Greater Freshness of
Appreciation and
Richness of
Emotional Response

Greater Social
Interest

Deeper, More Loving
Interpersonal
Relationships

Greater Creativity

More Unusual Sense
of Humour

More Democratic
Character Structure

Kazimierz Dabrowski (1902-1980)

The emotional experience and development of gifted young people



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graph TD; A[The emotional experience and development of gifted young people] --> B[Struck by intensity, sensitivity and tendency toward emotional extremes]; B --> C[Part of talented and creative self]; C --> D[Intensified experiencing, feeling, imagining and thinking potential for growth]; D --> E[Also intensified pain, overstimulation, conflict];
```

Struck by intensity, sensitivity and tendency toward emotional extremes

Part of talented and creative self

Intensified experiencing, feeling, imagining and thinking potential for growth

Also intensified pain, overstimulation, conflict

Dismantling as a
prelude to
construction

Creation at a higher
level

Self is many parts
working together

Out of loss, grief
despair and inner
fragmentation

Positive inner growth

Emotional
development

Inner seeking

Figuring

Anguish

Questioning human
existence

Elements that
comprise the striving
for optimal human
development

Theory of Positive Disintegration

Overexcitabilities

Psychomotor – movement, restless, driven, augmented capacity for being active



Sensual – enhanced refinement and aliveness of sensual experience



Intellectual – thirst for knowledge, discovery, questioning, love of ideas, search for truth, analysis



Imaginational – vividness of imagery, richness of association, facility for dreams, fantasies and invention, preference for unusual and unique,



Emotional – great depth and intensity of emotional life expressed in a wide range of feelings, great happiness, profound sadness, compassion, responsibility, self-examination

Bruce Perry: Developmental Insults

Children exposed to consistent, predictable, nurturing, and enriched experiences develop neurobiological capabilities that increase their chance for health, happiness, productivity, and creativity

Children exposed to neglectful, chaotic, and terrorizing environments have an increased risk of significant problems in all domains of functioning.

Dysfunctional symptoms and functional assets in children are both related to the nature, timing, pattern, and duration of their developmental experiences.

In a child who has experienced chronic threats, the result is a brain that exists in a persisting state of fear.

Question: Methodology – Measurement - Outcomes

Perry

Where the young person has been
– brain, nurturing

Where the young person is –
relational history, developmental
insults, trauma and neglect

Where the young person should go
– developmentally appropriate
interventions

Question: validity and methods



As we are

- Me/we Balance
- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=471580900041083>



In Practice I meet ...

- Very critical perception of own value/s
- Dissatisfaction with self (angry)
- Inferiority and frustrated with own inadequacy
- Disquiet with self –agitated and fearful
- Shame and embarrassed by ones deficiencies
- Guilt and anguish over moral failures
- Positive maladaptation and antagonism and protest against violations of ethical/social principles

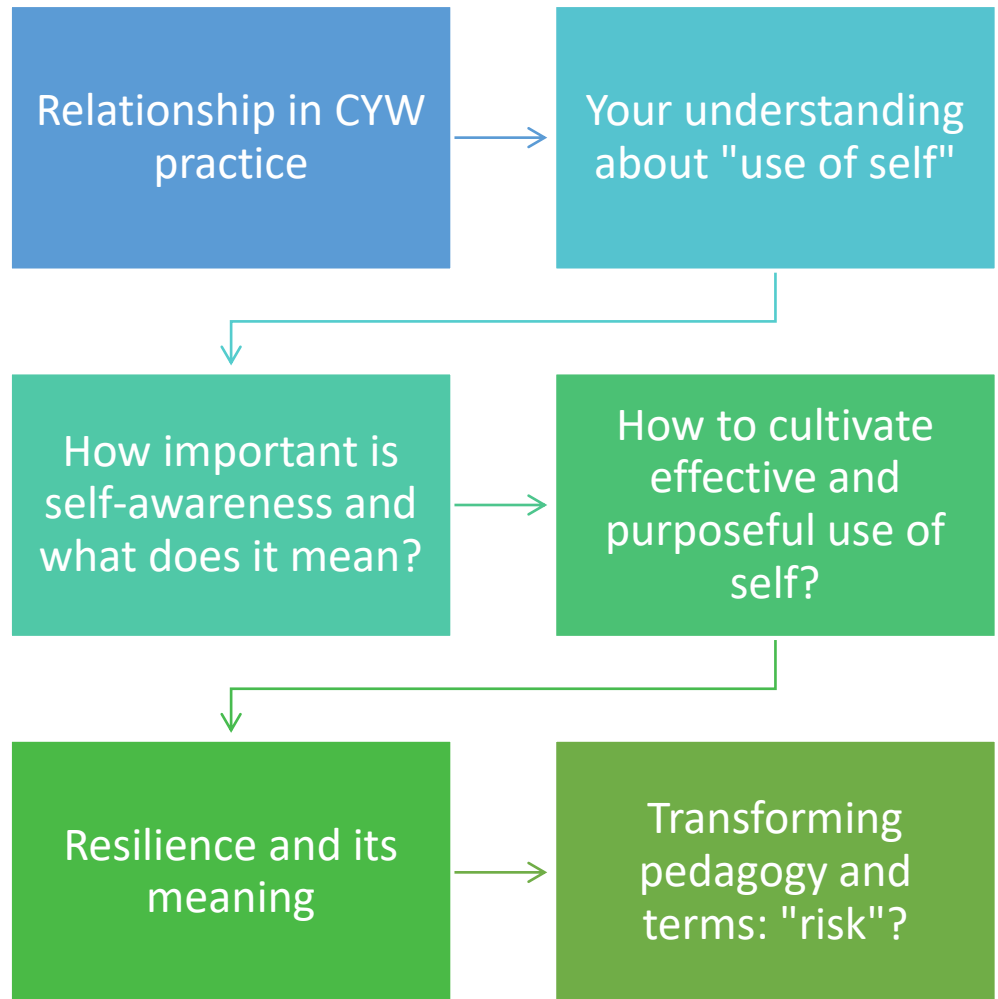
Ord (2007)

Ord (2007:32) states

behavioural change can be supported by recognising that a curriculum based approach based on specific objectives can lead to change and learning for young people.

“the process approach does not therefore start with the end product - what is to be learnt, rather its starting point is how this learning is best facilitated”

Purposeful Use of Self



Essential Elements - Self

Characteristics impact client

Contribution to relationship rivals that of person

Disciplined Use of Genuine Self -remarkable and satisfying results

Growth in young person

Emanuel Tropp necessary components - compassion, mutuality, empathy, humility, respect, and *openness*

Rogers (1961)

Fundamental component of mental life is the self concept

An entity that develops under the influence of conditional and unconditional positive regard

Essential Components

Reflective
Practice

Key
Concepts in
Strengths
Based

- Relationship
- Attachment Theory

Skills and
Interventions
—

- Enhance Practice
- Language
- Models and Application (PCP, Maslow, SFBT, DASIE)

Components

Reflexivity in Practice through

- Advanced Self-awareness
- Process and Experiential - MBCT

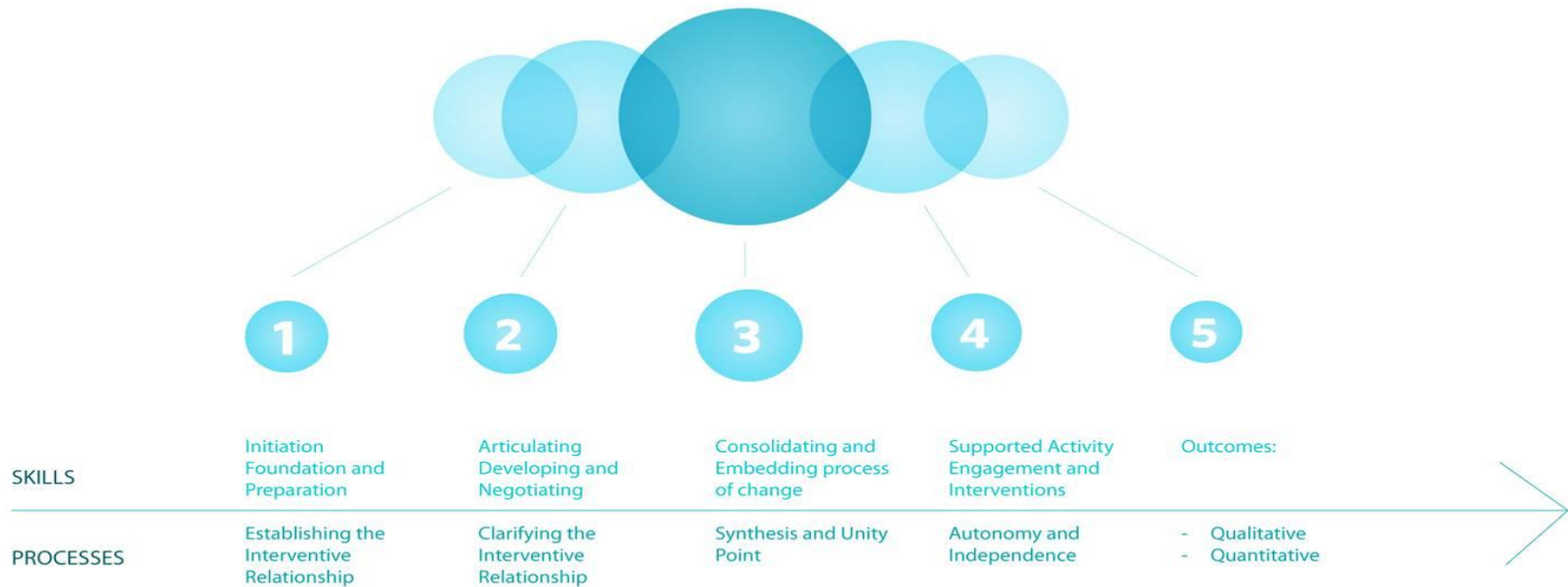
Professional Self Care

CPD

Supervision

Boundaries

The Interventive Relationship



Outcomes: How the work makes a difference

QUALITATIVE

Protective Factors Resiliency Self Esteem
 Family + Social Relationships Autonomy
 Problem Solving Skills Social Competence

QUANTITATIVE

Increased Parenting Capacity Greater Social Inclusion
 School Attendance Safer Children Offending Rates
 Increased Community Involvement Emotional Wellbeing



We must challenge the deficit approach, the myth of the “normal” the CYW

Practice must see beyond traditional approaches to strive for opportunities that aim toward optimal well-being.

Turning toward purposeful use of self and appreciation of excellence in applying Strengths Based Approaches in CYW

Conclusion

Mis-diagnosis

Missed diagnosis

Integration

Multi-level

Multifaceted

Perfectionism...

Turning Toward Self

Appreciating

Reframing

Deconstructing

Reconstructing

Allowing...

Training

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